



CAUSES, EFFECTS & TREATMENT OF SUBSTANCE ABUSE: A LITERATURE REVIEW

Anmol

PhD Scholar, PG Department of Psychology, Ravenshaw University, Cuttack, India-753004.

ABSTRACT

Substance abuse has become a global challenge all over the world. Although the youths are the most affected category, yet the menace of substance use is not limited to youths alone. An increasing trend in the use of substance among lonely people, especially the elderly, has also been reported. The consumer generally neglects the side effects of such substance use in lieu of the short-term gains obtained from the effects of such illicit drugs. This paper reviews the various reasons for addiction and the side effects of substance abuse. An attempt has been made to prescribe solutions and also multiple precautions for counteracting substance use as well as abuse. The treatment methods, as well as reasons for addiction, are discussed in the context of the bio-psychosocial model to integrate the various factors that can trigger the use or relapse of habit substance use. The paper concludes with precautions that can be adopted to prevent the onset of substance use and abuse.

KEYWORDS: Reasons for addiction, Side effects of drugs, Biopsychosocial model, Treatment and Precautions.

INTRODUCTION:

Substance abuse refers to the hazardous or harmful use of psychoactive substances, including alcohol and illegal drugs¹. Addiction is a complex condition, a brain disease that is manifested by compulsive substance use despite harmful consequence². Lots of people indulge in abuse of drugs, including alcohol or smoking. We might even sometimes overindulge. However, generally, this does not qualify as a dependency. That can be, in part, since we figure out how to regain equilibrium and select alternative rewards such as spending time together with family or entertaining drug-free hobbies. However, for those vulnerable to excess "desiring," it might be hard to keep this balance. At the meantime, many people should reframe the way we think about dependence. The addiction and drug dependence processes employ various principles and mechanism that overlaps with several disciplines.

RATIONALE OF THE STUDY:

Because the domain of addiction encompasses multiple areas, most of the existing literature is focussed on a particular aspect of substance use and addiction processes. This paper attempts to integrate various findings from such current literature and present a holistic view of addiction processes, their side effects as well as treatment options.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

Often, the person suffering from dependence does not lack the willpower to stop drugs. They understand and realize the pain and discomfort it generates them around. Addiction makes a craving that is often more powerful than any one individual could conquer alone³. However, the question arises why some people become addicted to drugs and why not others, even if all of them are exposed to the same conditions. What are the side-effects of being dependent on drugs and is treatment even possible in case of addiction? These are some of the questions that we will review in the upcoming sections.

Causes of Addictions:

Vulnerability to addiction refers to an individual's risk of developing a dependence during his or her life³. Various factors like biological, behavioral, emotional, and sociological can lead to drugs abuse.

One reason for substance abuse is that drugs or alcohol may reduce your depression symptoms or help to get rid of emotional or physical pain in the short run¹. However, the long term ill effects of substance use far outweigh the short term gains. Further, the short term gains like relief from anxiety or depression increases in the long run and becomes more resistant to medications. Possessing multiple health problems and taking many drugs can place seniors at risk of antipsychotic medication or getting hooked, especially when they abuse drugs³. Another main reason may be that young women and men enjoy themselves when they take drugs.

Recent studies suggest that GABA also plays a vital part in exposure to addiction⁶. GABA stands for Gamma-Aminobutyric acid and is the chief inhibitory neurotransmitter in the human nervous system⁷.

Drug dependence can also happen as a means of dealing with uncomfortable feelings or anxiety⁸. People often use medication to relieve anxiety. Drugs influence various individuals in a variety of ways. Since they supply immediate positive consequences, therapy must help the individual find their own choice of benefits for healing.

Risk-taking or novelty-seeking traits prefer using addictive drugs⁹.

A variety of psychological and psychiatric disorders like depression, borderline personality disorder, schizophrenia, and so on put individuals at more risk of substance abuse than the normal population¹⁰.

If family members are engaged in substance use, then it using can raise the probability of adolescents developing substance use or abuse later in life¹¹. Similarly, cultural components help ascertain the disposition of dependence. The introduction of a drug to two cultures simultaneously may result in different outcomes.

Peer pressure is generally associated with adolescence¹². Sometimes people give in to peer pressure because they don't want to hurt their peer feelings or else they do not know how to say a "no"¹³. Peer pressure can lead to alcohol misuse. Consequently, it may make the adolescent do things they wouldn't do.

There are lots of causes of medication abuse and getting hooked on medication. Long-term medication use may also result in dependence¹⁴. Sometimes, it may lead the student to drop out of college, which further threatens their potential ability to secure a job and make a living. When the life of youth gets disrupted, it affects a whole lot of people. Teen drug abuse is closely associated with insufficient judgment, which might lead to unplanned and unsafe sex.

Emotional anxieties reinforce drug abuse behaviors. Various fears such as fear of losing somebody, losing your position in your family or workplace and so on can strengthen the need for substance use and prevent the person from escaping the vicious cycle of drugs abuse.

Side Effects of Substance Use:

Addiction is an exceptionally debilitating result of alcohol or drug abuse, which may lead to significant impairment in several regions of someone's life, ranging from work roles to societal and parental functioning. Abuse of different medications can also be associated with an increased likelihood of suicide¹⁵. No matter the cause of abusing prescription or illegal drugs or medicine, it may result in the development of dependence, and it is a disorder which may be handled with the correct therapy. It's an extreme urge to use increasing amounts of a specific material or materials to the exclusion of other actions. Drug abuse may become continuing and compulsive, whatever the unwanted consequences are for the abuser¹⁶.

The consequences of stimulant use can extend well beyond the short term. The effects of high dosage of drugs may include instantaneous nervous system paralysis and similar results that heroin users experience¹⁶. Drug use by pregnant women can severely affect the new-born babies also.¹⁷

Alcohol and drug use and misuse raises the threat of suicide¹⁵ and also the danger of death or injury as a consequence of accidents or automobile crashes¹⁸.

Tolerance is a contributing component to the development of dependency¹⁹.

What is dependence ?. While using a medicine, the abuser is unable to succeed in sports, school, and other pursuits.

Alcohol abuse may ruin relationships with family and friends, and may also lead to life-threatening ailment. Underage alcohol misuse is thought to be a signifi-

cant public health issue all around the world, leading to accidents, accidents, offenses, poor school performances, and sometimes even death²⁰. Teen drug use isn't rare among college students²¹. Additionally, it puts people in danger of violence. Long-term medication use may also result in dependence. Illicit drug dependence can cause the individual to eliminate everything and everybody that comes in the way of preventing drugs use¹⁹. Since the abuser gets more dysfunctional, they necessarily go past the laws of society, and as a result of this, they become arrested. Also, many addicts cannot stop using drugs, even while they are in prison.

Excessive alcohol consumption could have a negative impact on aging. Regular usage of alcohol is related to a higher chance of arthritis²². Moderate alcohol intake also increases the threat of liver disorder¹⁸. Alcohol has been demonstrated to have anti-inflammatory properties²⁰. Besides dependency dangers, alcohol poses a severe threat to the physical wellbeing and development of teens²³. A substantial quantity of alcohol within the very long term may lead to alcoholic cardiomyopathy. Alcohol or drugs are usually used to self-medicate the symptoms of depression or nervousness. It might be a massive part of an individual's social group or might have been part of family life (sometimes rather destructively). Getting dependent on it may result in a wide assortment of critical health issues¹⁸. With time consuming too much alcohol can change the common purpose of the areas of the mind linked to the experience of enjoyment, judgment, and also the capacity to exercise control over the behavior.

Substance abuse isn't uncommon among teenagers as they're the most vulnerable to developing an addiction²⁰. It negatively impacts not just the individual involved but others too. It impairs the productivity of the individual. It might also result in serious health issues, make the individual weak and occasionally wholly ruin the natural look of the individual.

Cardiovascular or cerebrovascular diseases can be caused by cocaine abuse²⁴. Abuse of prescription drugs can be hazardous in case the abusers don't seek out therapy.

Long-term usage of medication may result in a profound influence in the way your brain functions and result in higher stress and anxiety⁸. The use of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs has significantly harmful impacts on health, which may end up being deadly.

Cigarette dependence is one of the hardest habits to break. Even in the event you've already given up your cigarette dependence, there could nevertheless be irreversible changes in your lungs. Smoking cigarettes increases the odds of atherosclerosis and increases the threat of coronary attack²⁵. Smoking causes cancer, and esophageal cancer²⁶ is one of the most common causes of cancer deaths in the world.

Taking drugs such as heroin causes considerable damage to the entire body¹⁶. It affects your ability to concentrate and focus at work. Other than that, Drugs and alcohol are usually utilized to enhance particular encounters. They've also been applied in a bid to improve athletic performance as it might help provide the users with some additional power to be utilized in sports.

Solutions:

Focusing on adolescent lifestyles is one of the keys to prevention as well as treatment of drugs dependence. Rightful parental guidance may be a particularly powerful influence during the teenage years when coworkers are significant to a teenager's identity²⁷. In reality, it's among the very best methods to get a teenager to practice decent behavior and make wise decisions in her or his life.

Treatment Options:

There are many options which have been effective in treating drug dependence²⁷, Such as:

- Counseling- can range from CBT to pure behavioral counseling.
- Rehabilitation centers where several programs are offered. Most of the rehab centers are based on the policy of admitting the "patient" under the observation of health professionals. Such health professionals then help the individual get rid of his/her addiction and also educate the family members about fighting the addiction process.
- Medications

While investigating the causes of addiction, the psychosocial, as well as the social, cultural factors, must also be given due importance. Usually, while diagnosing an addicted patient, the biomedical model of diagnosis is used. The biomedical model stresses that only biological factors need to be investigated while working out the cause of a particular illness or disorder. It neglects the impact of external environment, psychological and sociological factors that can lead to the manifestation of a disease or illness. The patient is considered passive in the biomedical model, and the doctor is considered to be the active authority responsible for making the final decision. Another model by the name of biopsychosocial model stresses on a holistic approach to integrate the various factors that can lead towards the manifestation of a particular illness or disorder. George Engel pro-

posed the biopsychosocial model of health in 1977. This model stresses on three factors that is the biological factors, the psychological factors, and the social factors. While considering the cases of addiction, the biopsychosocial model is better equipped than the biomedical model in addressing the origins of substance use behavior. Only putting an addicted patient in a Rehab Centre is not going to work as long as the patient himself or herself decides saying no to the substance use. This is where the biopsychosocial model helps professional as well as addicted clients to make holistic decisions based on a variety of factors. For example, a man who is taking alcohol because of a failed platonic relationship will continue to do so unless he is made to see or face reality. Without addressing the causes or reasons of the person that triggers him to use alcohol any attempts to make the person independent of the alcohol use will fail in the long run. The reason is simple. Addiction causes must be addressed by not just prescribing medications but also by targeting the triggers that promote substance use among the addicted person. From this viewpoint, the role of family members and friends of an addict becomes pivotal in the process of de-addicting the person. Therefore, health professionals in charge of rehabilitation centers where clients are admitted for addiction issues must also include the family members as well as the immediate peer circle of the addicted person to improve the efficiency of the de-addiction programs.

Precautions:

If you are abusing or addicted to drugs or know someone who is, now is the day to start on the road to healing. For example, guardians must make sure that their children stay away from people with whom they used to do drugs together²¹. Above all, it is critical to understand that addiction is not just a behavioral change, instead it is disease that requires prompt interventions² and there is nothing to be ashamed about in taking or seeking professional help for overcoming for your drug addiction.

CONCLUSION:

The paper reviewed various reasons for drug addiction. The discussion followed the side effects of drugs, their treatment options, and precautions to prevent the onset of drugs use and abuse. The existing literature uniformly points out that addiction has become a potential issue all over the world. Therefore, due importance should be given to counter the menace of the drugs. The review also suggests that various factors can lead to the trigger of drugs abuse, and therefore, the responsibility of guardians or parents to prevent their children from falling into the vicious cycle of drugs uses has increased lot than before. Similarly, the existing literature also points out towards the harmful side-effects of drugs and also reveals that such side-effects are potent enough to destroy the life of the addicted person. It is concluded that illicit drugs use and abuse are both, detrimental to the development of a society and therefore, it is not just the responsibility of government but also the responsibility of the citizens to counteract the increasing influences of substance use.

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